

NSA review completed

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Mr. George Carver

CIA

ROOM 6F19

Dear George,

Attached paper is my first cut at defining some future intelligence requirements for Southeast Asia and some of the policy level decisions which would be a necessary follow-on. I suggest that, for practical purposes, our group focus its attention on the levels of U.S. military combat activity in Southeast Asia in FY-73, probable enemy activity in that same year, and specific intelligence needs associated therewith. Believe we should also address such specifics as the degree to which we would be able to operate intelligence activities jointly with RVN, possible intelligence pay offs to Thais if we get an increased personnel ceiling, what secure operating locations can we count on in RVN and what does the future hold regarding overflights of RVN, Cambodia, Laos, etc.

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Intelligence Objectives for Southeast Asia

Next Two to Five Years

I. Primary Assumptions

A. Viable non-communist governments will continue to exist in South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Thailand; however, military or insurgency activity in these areas will continue at some level.

B. Existing Intelligence requirements for countries other than North and South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos will remain basically unchanged.

C. A phase down or complete withdrawal of U.S. presence in Southeast Asia will impact on U.S. intelligence needs in South and North Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos, ~~and~~ such impact being defined as a shift in emphasis from tactical needs to needs more directly responsive to national level policy-makers.

D. The U.S. will not provide substantial amounts of SIGINT product directly to the government of South Vietnam but will direct its efforts to building a capability within THE RVNAF to supply their own SIGINT needs.

E. U.S. produced tactical intelligence will continue to be required for at least the next two years for targeting U.S. air strikes and heavy weapons and for use by U.S. advisors to the RVNAF.

F. US. technical support to RVN intelligence collection activities will require U.S. presence in South Vietnam in substantial numbers over the next two to five years.

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G. The Chinese Communist and/or the Soviet Union involvement in Southeast Asia will not exceed present levels.

H. With a reduction of other intelligence collection activities, increased reliance on SIGINT will be necessary.

II. Primary Intelligence Requirements

A. Long-term Requirements (FY-72 - FY-76)

1. Organization, capabilities, and intentions of the government of North Vietnam and Communist organizations in South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos to achieve their purposes by military, political and/or economic means including liaisons with other Communist or sympathetic governments. The focus of intelligence activities will be upon:

(a) Order of Battle information down to Regimental/Provincial level including specific locations, movements and strengths and including their intelligence gathering apparatus.

(b) Early warning information regarding substantial changes in capabilities and intentions of major ground, air and naval units.

(c) Logistic information including the full accounting of the organization, operation and movement of personnel and supplies among Communist Units within Southeast Asia.

(d) Guerilla and local force activities including capabilities, organization and intentions of the Communist Infrastructure.

(e) Information on the stability of political and military Communist organizations in North and South Vietnam, and military Communist channels.

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Cambodia and Laos to include the identification of areas of weakness and possible exploitation.

(f) Information on the stability and capability of legitimate political, military and economic organizations of the Republic of South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

(g) Diplomatic and other internal activities of the DRV.

Intelligence information regarding (b) above will be reported immediately. The reporting of all other information will vary with a maximum of 60 days after the event.

B. Transitional Requirements (FY-72 - FY-73)

1. Specific locations useful for targeting purposes of Communist military units down to battalion level and other activities including AAA and logistic units, both ground and seaborne.

2. Early warning of the intentions/reactions of all Communist units in North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos at all levels for tactical exploitation.

3. Early warning of the intentions/reactions of all Communist units in Southeast Asia including the Chicomso to U.S./Allied military operations with particular attention on exportation of military, political or economic power by the Chinese Communist.

4. Specific information on Communist reaction and intention regarding the implementation phases of such U.S. policy moves as Vietnamization and U.S. withdrawal.

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Intelligence Information on these requirements will be reported in a time-frame consistent with the need and opportunity for tactical reaction.

III. Primary NSA Objectives

A. To fulfill from SIGINT exploitation the above intelligence requirements.

B. To provide, in cooperation with CIA, the capability for the ARVN SIGINT organization to produce tactically useful SIGINT for the support of their own operations by end FY-73 with particular attention to:

1. Identification and movement of VC units down to battalion size in South Vietnam and immediate peripheral areas; and

2. Determination of VC military and political intentions in South Vietnam.

The emphasis in this area will be on the equipping and technical training of the ARVN SIGINT organization and technical steering to focus them on targets of immediate threat within South Vietnam. Of necessity, they will not be encouraged to attempt comprehensive coverage of North Vietnam and the major North Vietnamese controlled logistic system if such coverage is at the expense of units posing a more immediate threat to their security.

C. To begin a phased restructuring of the U.S. SIGINT operation in Southeast Asia with the intention of meeting the above objectives from outside South Vietnam where it is technically possible to do so and consistent with timely

reporting requirements. Intelligence collection by the South Vietnamese will be the base upon which the future U.S. SIGINT structure will be built under the assumption that this collection will continue, will expand, and will be partially responsive to U.S. intelligence needs.

IV. Primary Policy Level Decisions Needed

A. The above assumptions, requirements and objectives are acceptable.

B. The Thailand ceiling will be raised to allow the accomplishment of certain SIGINT tasks from that country which are now done in South Vietnam.

C. The physical security of U.S. SIGINT operations, which because of technical or timely reporting needs must remain in South Vietnam, will be provided.

D. The resources necessary for expansion in Thailand, the possible need for increased airborne collection, the establishment of seaborne collection platforms and special, dedicated collection facilities in Saigon will be forthcoming in time to permit an orderly restructuring of the U.S. SIGINT effort. This restructuring with emphasis on reduction of U.S. presence in South Vietnam will not begin in substantial terms until after FY-73 when the capabilities of RVN SIGINT effort will have reached more productive proportions. At the present, we have no assurance that the RVN SIGINT effort will be able to meet U.S. SIGINT needs in Southeast Asia in either terms of quality or timeliness for the foreseeable future.

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